DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 335 CG 008 170

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| AUTHOR | Dayton, Charles W. |
| TITLE | Case Studies in Practical Career Guidance, Number 6: Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education North Gwinnett High School, Suwanee, Georgia. |
| INSTITUTION | American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto, Calif. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation. |
| REPORT NO | AIR-346-6-73-TR-6 |
| PUB DATE | Jun 73 |
| CONTRACT | OEC-0-72-4986 |
| NOTE | 22p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29 |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Academic Education; *Career Education; *Dropout Prevention; High School Students; Student Attitudes; Student Development; *Underachievers; *Vocational Education |

ABSTRACT

Georgia's Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education (CVAE) Program is a statewide program administered with considerable local autonomy in approximately 125 high schools around the state. It serves underachieving students who are potential dropouts, providing them with career education through CVAE classes, interlocking career-related curricula in their academic courses, career and personal counseling, and work experience. Its goals are to develop positive attitudes toward work, other people, and the environment in unmotivated students and to keep potential dropouts in school and prepare them for a place the world of work as contributing citizens. Other documents in this series are CG 008 165 through CG 008 169 and CG 008 171 through CG 008 176. (Author)

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# CASE STUDIES IN PRACTICAL CAREER GUIDANCE
# NUMBER 6

ED 078335

**Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education**

**North Gwinnett High School**

**Suwanee, Georgia**

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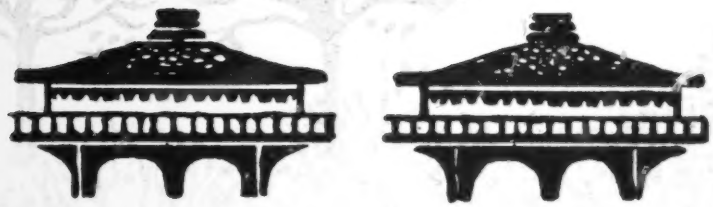

CG 008 170

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AIR-346-6/73-TR

TECHNICAL REPORT

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NUMBER 6

Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education
North Gwinnett High School
Suwanee, Georgia

Charles W. Dayton

American Institutes for Research
in the Behavioral Sciences
Palo Alto, California
June, 1973

*The project reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract from the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The opinions expressed, however, do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the Office of Education should be inferred.*

U.S. Department of

HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education

Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation

This case study is one in a series of thirteen which was produced by the Youth Development Research Program of the American Institutes for Research under contract with the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation of the U.S. Office of Education. The purpose of the contract was to examine the practical career guidance, counseling, and placement which is provided to noncollege-bound secondary level students. As part of the effort, programs which are making an illustrative attempt to deal with the needs of noncollege-bound youth were identified and described in case studies. Case studies have been written on the following programs:

1. Baltimore Placement and Follow-up Program
   Baltimore City Public Schools
   Baltimore, Maryland

2. Career Development Center
   Troy High School
   Fullerton, California

3. Career and Educational Planning Program
   Pioneer Senior High School
   San Jose, California

4. Career Guidance Program
   Hood River Valley High School
   Hood River, Oregon

5. Computerized Vocational Information System
   Willowbrook High School
   Villa Park, Illinois

6. Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education
   North Gwinnett High School
   Suwanee, Georgia

7. Developmental Career Guidance Project
   Detroit Public Schools
   Detroit, Michigan

8. Employability Development Team
   Cleveland Public Schools
   Cleveland, Ohio

9. Job Development Program
   Cleveland Public Schools
   Cleveland, Ohio

10. Kimberly Guidance Program
    Kimberly High School
    Kimberly, Idaho

11. Lenawee Vocational-Technical Center and Placement Program
    Adrian, Michigan

12. Occupational Learning Center
    Syracuse City School District
    Syracuse, New York

13. Youth Career Action Program
    San Jose Unified School District
    San Jose, California

Other products of this contract include Practical Career Guidance, Counseling, and Placement for the Noncollege-Bound Student: A Review of the Literature, and the project's final report which is entitled Planning, Structuring, and Evaluating Practical Career Guidance for Integration by Noncollege-Bound Youths. The final report outlines a planning-evaluation model which program personnel may use in developing local career guidance counseling and placement services.

COORDINATED VOCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION
NORTH GWINNETT HIGH SCHOOL
SUWANEE, GEORGIA

Abstract

Georgia's Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education (CVAE) Program is a statewide program administered with considerable local autonomy in approximately 125 high schools around the state. It serves underachieving students who are potential dropouts, providing them with career education through CVAE classes, interlocking career-related curricula in their academic courses, career and personal counseling, and work experience. Its goals are to develop positive attitudes toward work, other people, and the environment in unmotivated students and to keep potential dropouts in school and prepare them for a place in the world of work as contributing citizens.

# COORDINATED VOCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION

*I like CVAE. Before I was in CVAE I was a "roughneck." I didn't care about going to school or nobody else. I was a bully looking for fights and starting them. But I found out that instead of fighting with people I could make friends with them. If it hadn't been for CVAE I wouldn't be working now, I'd probably just be sitting around or fighting. It's helped me with my grades too.*

--Ronnie

## Introduction

Ronnie is an eleventh grader in the Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education (CVAE) Program at North Gwinnett High School in Suwanee, Georgia, about 40 miles northeast of Atlanta. Ronnie's day reflects significant changes from traditional high school experience. He takes some of the usual courses--English and math, for example--and he is in school from 8:00 to 12:30. But at 1 P.M. he goes to his welding job which was secured for him by his CVAE instructor. In this job he earns his own money, bears the responsibilities that go with having a job, and learns the skills related to his chosen field. During his ninth- and tenth-grade years, Ronnie was enrolled in the CVAE class at North Gwinnett High School. In this class he learned about the world of work through class instruction and discussions, field trips to local industries and a variety of work settings and occupational fields, individual and group projects, films, and practice job interviews. He participated in work experience on the school grounds and then in several entry level jobs. Also, some of his regular courses were oriented toward providing useful knowledge related to the world of work for himself and his classmates. By the time he reached his eleventh year, he had acquired some of the background knowledge and skills needed for holding down a more responsible job. He is now employing these in his welding job, and he may work himself into a regular full-time job by the time he graduates.

Ronnie's experience is shared by 48 other students at North Gwinnett High School. The program is housed in a classroom at the high school, where the Program Director/class instructor/Coordinator sets up headquarters and

conducts the CVAE classes for ninth and tenth graders. Students are selected according to several criteria, but the central thrust is oriented toward helping students who are doing poorly in the regular school program, and who have been identified as potential dropouts. Thus, low achievement scores and high rates of absenteeism are two criteria employed. Students typically learn about the program by the eighth grade through a presentation made by the Program Director that year and through friends and acquaintances in the program. More students apply for the program than can be accommodated.

The success of the program is attributable to many factors. The program seems to have avoided the stigma that often goes with "special" classes; in fact, it has achieved a certain status in students' minds as an avenue to the work world and the independence and responsibility that go with holding a job. Also, the instructor contributes an enormous amount of energy both to making the two years of classes worthwhile and meaningful and to finding satisfactory job slots and placing students in positions appropriate to their abilities and employers' needs. Thus, the program meets its goal of filling the void for students who are not strong academically or able to consider college, but who can nevertheless become productive members of society. Students regularly express gratitude for the sense of success they experience. Absenteeism is down significantly at the high school. Local employers are pleased to have a source of employees available and cooperate in making the work useful to students and the experience a positive one for them. Parents appreciate the aid given their youngsters, who have usually been previously ignored or frustrated by the educational system. Finally, dropouts and failures or "roughnecks" are becoming productive members of society.

## Origin of the Project

North Gwinnett High School serves approximately 800 eighth-grade through twelfth-grade students from predominantly rural settings. It became the setting for the CVAE program in the fall of 1969, following a pilot program during the previous year in an adjoining county. CVAE is a statewide program in Georgia. It was begun in the summer of 1969, at which time a six-week summer seminar was organized at the University of Georgia and a number of interested persons were brought together to develop, with the assistance of a University professor, the goals and nature of a new

Georgia vocational program. Called Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education (CVAE), the new program was tried the first year at 13 pilot sites. However, in the summer the process was repeated, appropriate adaptations were made, and several new coordinator trainees began to participate. Each subsequent year has seen the training of new coordinators and the implementation of the program at new sites. There are approximately 125 such programs currently in operation at high schools around the state, and more will be added for the 1973-74 school year. The program is located in central city urban schools as well as in rural settings like the one described in this case study.

In 1969, Georgia identified North Gwinnett County as one with a high student dropout rate. The possibility of implementing a CVAE program was explored with the superintendent of the county, as it was with others from around the state who were located in problem areas. Thirteen superintendents and the coordinators then available were allowed to choose the particular school within these counties that they wanted to work in. The coordinator for Gwinnett County picked North Gwinnett High School because a new and forward-looking principal was starting there, some other new programs were being tried, and the school seemed most in need of the program. With the agreement of the principal, the North Gwinnett High School CVAE Program was launched in the fall of 1969.

The need for the program at North Gwinnett was apparent. Little was available to students in the way of career counseling. Although the school employed a full-time counselor, his time was mostly taken up with scheduling, college counseling, and other duties. There was no assistance designed specifically for underachievers, and--in the words of the CVAE Director--"they dropped out in droves."

## Project Development

Once North Gwinnett High School had been chosen, and the Coordinator there had been designated, the responsibility for the program fell largely on her shoulders. One of the first tasks required coordinating the CVAE program with the rest of the school curricula. Meetings were organized on a weekly basis at the high school to accomplish this coordination, and instructors in a number of areas (English, math, science) were recruited to begin developing interlocking courses. This required integrating

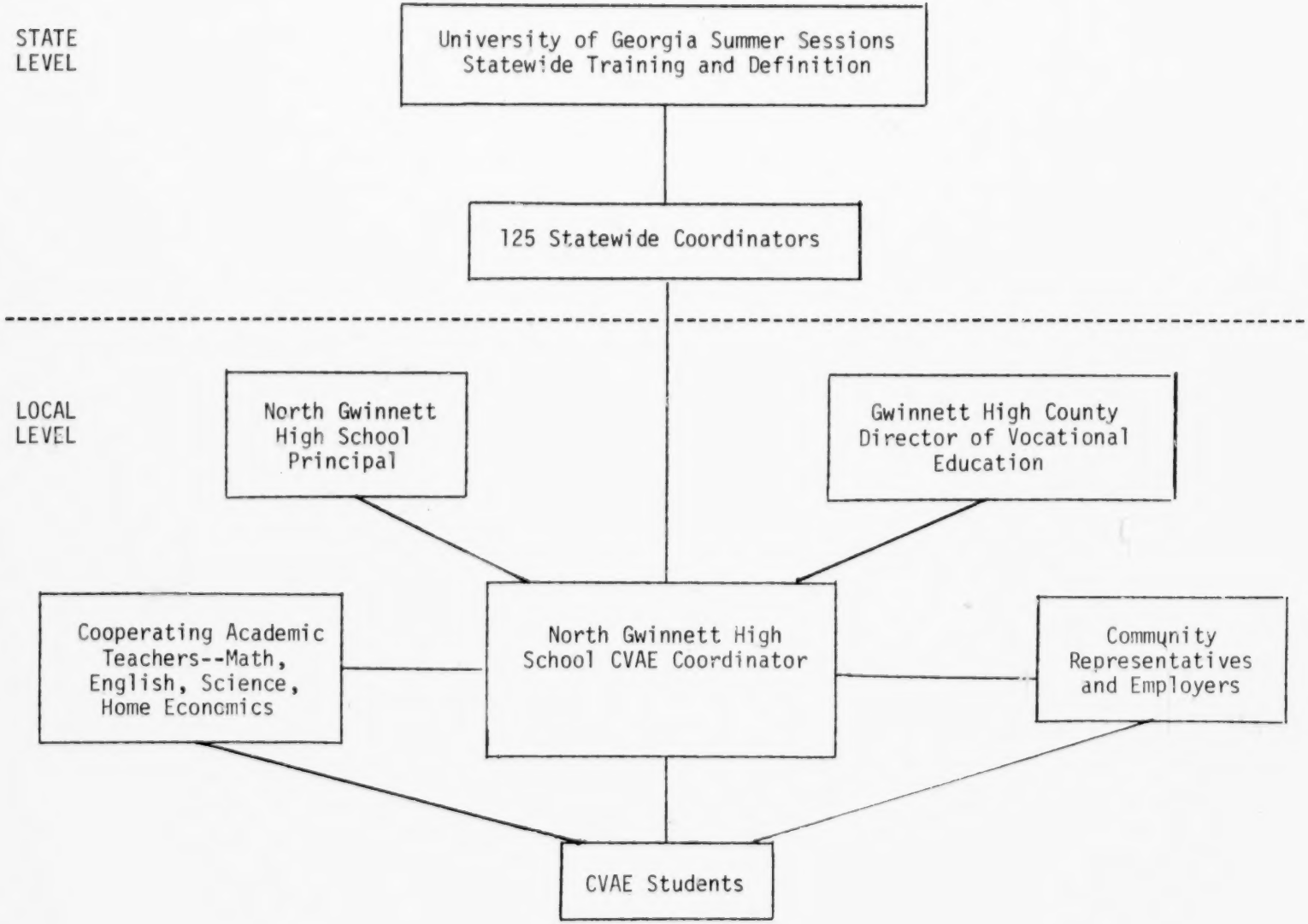
career-related material into the content of the courses so that students participating in CVAE would have instruction pertinent to their work futures in academic areas as well as in the CVAE class.

Design and implementation of the CVAE classes themselves also fell to the Coordinator. Drawing on the material accumulated in the University of Georgia summer session (CVAE training guides, a set of coordinator's handbooks) and her own resources, she designed the format and content for these classes. The orientation in these classes was away from traditional classroom procedures, such as lectures, textbooks, and tests, and strongly toward student actions, such as field trips, working on projects, and participating in discussions.

After the first year, placement of students in actual work situations began to consume a major portion of the Coordinator's time and energy. This placement required considerable contact work with a broad cross section of local employers, as well as coordination of the work with school schedules and students' interests. After students began to spend time in work settings, first at school and then in the community, the Coordinator then followed up to ensure satisfaction on the parts of both students and employers.

The state paid the Coordinator's salary for the first year, but in subsequent years, it has become the responsibility of the local district. The district is also responsible for the expenses for one field trip per month. The state continues to contribute travel money for the Coordinator at the rate of $800 per year and is also contributing $500 for student materials for the 1972-73 year. The latter amount originally came from the federal government.

The organizational chart on the following page illustrates the relationship of the parts of the program and of program personnel.


STATE LEVEL
University of Georgia Summer Sessions Statewide Training and Definition
125 Statewide Coordinators
LOCAL LEVEL
North Gwinnett High School Principal
Gwinnett High County Director of Vocational Education
Cooperating Academic Teachers--Math, English, Science, Home Economics
North Gwinnett High School CVAE Coordinator
Community Representatives and Employers
CVAE Students

## Current Status of the Project

### Target Population and Setting

Suwanee is located in a border area between the southern reaches of Appalachia and the expanding northern suburbs of Atlanta. It is still predominantly rural, but a new interstate expressway has recently been built through the area, and there are preliminary indications of urbanization in the form of new industries and residences, particularly in the southern part of the county. These often appear alongside or near dilapidated unheated shacks that serve as homes for whole families.

The clients of the North Gwinnett High School and its CVAE Program thus come from predominantly rural settings. Some 85% of the students live on farms or in the country, while the remaining 15% come from small towns with populations of less than 5,000. Of the CVAE students currently enrolled in the program, 31 come from rural settings and 18 from small towns. The number of students in the CVAE is limited by the fact that there is only one Coordinator and she has a multitude of tasks to perform for each student. Some 92% of the CVAE students are white, and 8% are Black compared with a 96%-4% ratio in the school generally. The breakdown by grade is 22 ninth-graders, 18 tenth-graders, 4 eleventh-graders, and 5 twelfth-graders. Socioeconomic status is predominantly lower-middle class. Some 70% of the students come from families with incomes between $6,000 and $15,000 annually, with 5% falling above and 25% falling below that range. The program includes 32 males and 17 females.

Career goals of the CVAE students are varied, but they center on job-seeking directly after high school. The following breakdown summarizes their career goals: 10% will attend a two-year college program, trade school, or a vocational or technical program; 65% will take a job after graduation from high school and the program; 7% will marry and keep house; 4% will enlist in the Armed Forces; 10% will complete the program but not graduate from high school; and 4% will complete neither the program nor high school. Thus, the program is designed primarily for students going directly from a high school setting to a work setting.

Selection of students for the program is conducted according to a series of well-defined criteria. Candidates for the CVAE Program are:

1. Two or more grade levels below their peers.
2. Frequently or excessively absent.
3. Alienated from school.
4. Of dull normal intelligence or higher.
5. Underachieving for cultural or psychological reasons.

Selection of students is aided through use of the California Mental Maturity Test, Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills, and the student's grade point average. Students are selected by a screening committee consisting of eighth-grade teachers, the school principal, and the school counselor. The Coordinator, who chairs the committee, receives nominations from the other members of the committee, particularly seeking out students who are capable but underachieving and who will be able to respond to the program positively.

Several means are employed to determine student needs and desires in the program. General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) is used to determine abilities, and Ohio Vocational Interest Survey (OVIS) is used to establish interests and appropriate career directions. When students enter the program, they are asked to fill out survey forms designed to determine their career interests, and group discussions are conducted to aid in gathering this information and help inform students of some of the alternatives available. These are followed up with surveys throughout the year to keep in touch with students' current interests. After exploring a job, if a student determines he is not interested in that choice, he may change and explore another one. At the end of the first year (ninth grade), the Coordinator reassesses the students' needs and interests and works out the next year's schedule based on the results.

Goals and Objectives

The CVAE Program divides its goals into purposes, general objectives, and specific objectives, as follows.

Purposes

1. To interlock studies in academic classes and vocational labs in such a way as to reinterest students in learning and show the relevancy of school work to their current existence.

2. To take an underachieving but capable student at his current level and move him upward, and motivate him toward continued progress.

3. To provide the student with planned successes in order to break his former pattern of failure.

4. To develop in the unmotivated student positive attitudes toward work, other people, and his total environment.

5. To keep the potential dropouts in school and/or better prepare him for a place in the world of work and as a contributing citizen if and when he does drop out.

General Objectives

1. To lower the dropout rates in the public schools of Georgia.

2. To increase the school attendance of chronic absentees.

3. To provide an atmosphere and activities where students may experience success instead of failure so as to improve their self-concept, which in turn should improve their performance in school.

4. To provide remedial and remotivating learning situations which will allow students the opportunity to return to and succeed in regular academic or vocational classes.

Specific Objectives

1. To decrease the absenteeism rate by an average of at lease five days per student.

2. To increase the students' national achievement ranking on achievement tests in math, English, and science (if applicable) by five percentiles.

3. To increase a CVAE student's grade point average by .5 on a 4-point scale.

4. To reduce the dropout rate for students enrolled in the CVAE for at least one year to a percentage no greater than that for the entire school.

5. To decrease by 75% the proportion of students in the program who did not plan to finish high school.

6. To enable students who leave school while enrolled in CVAE to become employed for a period of at least six months.

7. To enable 50% of CVAE students to return to regular academic or vocational programs at the end of one year and 75% at the end of the second year, to do successful class work.

The CVAE Program defines its implementation procedures as follows:

1. To improve self-concept through individual and group counseling and guidance, home visits, planned successes, and total acceptance of students by the Coordinator.

2. To encourage students to stay in school and improve motivation to learn through interlocking academic and vocational curricula, smaller classes, and individual attention by teachers and the Coordinator.

3. To improve learning and working attitudes and provide job-entry skills through on-the-job work experiences either simulated at school or on normal jobs in the local community.

4. To provide opportunities for success, recognition, leadership, and involvement through Vocational Clubs of America (VOCA) activities and contests.

These purposes, objectives, and implementation procedures of the CVAE Program tie in closely with overall goals for vocational education in the state of Georgia. Other programs supplement CVAE and are structured along similar lines. Program of Education and Career Exploration (PECE), for example, attempts to aid students in junior high schools in terms of vocational education and is widely employed throughout the state. A county vocational high school is in the completion stages in Lawrenceville, a nearby small city, which many CVAE students will be able to attend. One estimate suggested that some 200 North Gwinnett High School students would be able to make use of this facility beginning next year. Such schools are being built around the state as part of Georgia's comprehensive effort to respond to the state's vocational education needs.

Project Staff

North Gwinnett High School's CVAE Program is staffed only by the Coordinator. No counselors, paraprofessionals, secretaries, or other support personnel are employed. The interlocking studies program requires the participation of regular academic teachers who receive a bonus of $400 per year when funding is available, but this participation is performed basically on a personal interest basis. Thus the Coordinator must be capable in many areas. Such a person must be an imaginative teacher; a firm disciplinarian and friend of the students; a public relations expert in relating to employers, parents, and the faculty and administration; a logistics

technician and secretary in arranging work schedules and transportation to and from job settings; and a couselor and guidance expert in helping students evolve career goals and deal with personal problems. The Coordinator's typical day is divided into instructing three CVAE classes (the ninth-grade class is divided into two sections, one for boys and one for girls; the tenth-grade class is combined); contacting potential employers and following up on students already employed, organizing a myriad of activities for VOCA, a club that provides social and project activities for students in the CVAE Program; and dealing with day-to-day difficulties. This suggests the need for a person with a strong background in counseling, guidance, and teaching and someone able to play a strong leadership role. In the case of North Guinnett, the Coordinator has taught for 12 years, directed a YWCA program for four years, holds a Master's and Specialist's Degree in guidance and counseling, and a B.A. in English and physical education.

Facilities, Materials, and Support

The CVAE Program is housed in a classroom at North Gwinnett High School, where the Coordinator teaches the three CVAE classes and out of which she operates in performing many of her other functions. She has assembled an array of materials pertinent to career education, and also uses the local library in Lawrenceville for needed materials. Community representatives contribute time and effort to supplement the courses. For example, a local banker conducts practice job interviews with students, and others come and talk about their work and its advantages and disadvantages.

Special Factors

Students' needs are responded to through the activities of the CVAE class and the VOCA (Vocational Clubs of America). Classroom activities include films and filmstrips, tapes, field trips, worksheets connected with a consumer education kit and a career manual, writing and presenting reports, outside speakers, assigned projects, practice interviews and job applications, group discussions, educative games, and tests and quizzes. Most students interviewed spoke particularly highly of the field trips, which are taken to local businesses and industries such as the telephone company, General Motors, a newspaper office, a manufacturer of women's garments, and so on. VOCA activities supplement these pursuits. Many social committees have been established to work on various projects: the annual scrapbook, the school-wide news magazine ("The Word"), social

events such as cookouts and an annual trip to Six Flags over Georgia, a Christmas play put on for retarded children, the annual statewide talent contests, an assembly program, and preparation for an Appreciation Breakfast for their employers and work supervisors. Thus between the CVAE classes and accompanying VOCA activities students are provided with a considerably more relevant experience than would otherwise be the case.

Supplementing these activities is the program of interlocking studies, which orients regular academic subjects toward work and life. In science, for example, such orientation might include working on practical projects and spending less time on theoretical matters. One project currently under way entails building a detailed scale model of a house, complete with furnishings (with the cooperation of the home economics class), which will allow students to develop a real picture of what is involved in assembling a building. The math teacher is also cooperating in this venture, integrating measurement and other building-related concepts into his CVAE-math class. The English curriculum is also designed to be relevant, emphasizing communication and practical matters rather than technicalities of grammar or writing. Teachers make the point that a key part of the experience consisted in grouping CVAE students and then assuring them of a successful experience to rekindle their interest and self-confidence. Students then develop a feeling of cohesiveness and cease experiencing the constant failure that comes from competing with their more skilled co-students. Once their confidence begins to return, dramatic improvement in academic work often result.

Another element in the program that supplements the CVAE classes and VOCA activities is work experience. Students in the program are placed in a variety of settings related as closely as possible to their expressed career interests. Working part time, they learn specific skills and abilities useful for permanent employment after graduation, as well as general responsibilities and habits related to holding a job. One student works on a horse farm, another in a government supply center, a third in a supermarket, and a fourth in a welding shop. The Coordinator has made extensive efforts to contact area employers and develop as broad a cross section of available positions as possible. Although it is not an actual full-time permanent work placement program, the CVAE Program often provides positions that become regular jobs after students graduate. It also provides

community representatives with the opportunity to help young people develop, and these representatives speak of the changes that students go through in much the same way that the teachers do; that is, they notice young people growing in terms of self-confidence and maturity.

Finally, the Coordinator contributes a considerable amount of time and energy to counseling students, helping them to develop career goals and solve personal problems. These counseling sessions may be in either group or individual settings. Students are encouraged to talk about their problems, and discussions among groups, with the leadership of the Coordinator, teach students that solutions are often available to their problems if they will think about them carefully and share them with others. The Coordinator attempts to present options to students in these sessions rather than making decisions for them. Such counseling is conducted constantly, often informally, as students learn to trust the Coordinator and deal with problems as they come up. This chance for students to view an adult as a friend and helper rather than as a judge can have a strongly positive effect.

Broad Impact

One of the best ways to develop a feel for the impact of the program is to review the comments of students, instructors, administrators, and employers about its effects. Students, for example, said:

> This program helped me to see I have the ability.
>
> I think it's an interesting course. I'm making friends. I didn't know nobody or nothing before. It helps you find a job. The best part is the work and the field trips.
>
> I get along with people better. And it's brought up my grades.
>
> It's helped me in meeting the public and getting along with my supervisor. And I can make friends now.
>
> It's kept me from quitting--really.
>
> After I quit school and then came back I really didn't care about school. Now there are so many things to do in CVAE, I'm never bored. It used to be a drag. Without it, I probably would have quit again.

Teachers, employers, and administrators also remark on the positive nature of the program. One teacher, for example, said:

> They realize they're not facing failure. Many have received F's for 9 or 10 years. Now they see B's and A's occasionally. It adds incentive. Winning their confidence is a key. They learn they won't fail if they try. You have to get past the fear of failure.

Another teacher commented:

> This is a cultural backlog area. Education isn't valued. Parents recommend going to work or getting married. I don't know if the program manages to build an attitude of "education for the enjoyment" but at least students are now working toward realistic goals and recognize the consequences of going or not going in that direction.

One comment from a community representative summarized those of several:

> The greatest strength of the program is that it gives young people an appreciation for the dignity of work. It gives a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence to young people, a niche for those not going on to college. It strengthens and develops the personality of the kids. It gives them pride and ambition.

A school administrator summarized his feeling thusly:

> Basically, we feel this is a good program. It has been mostly successful. There is much good work coming from students who would have been dropouts. The program has been well received by people in the community. It's not 100% successful. Kids can't always do the job. But in general, we're well pleased.

Evaluation

There are a number of evaluation procedures and forms for the program. Each student working on a job is evaluated regularly by his employer, and both the student and Coordinator receive a copy of the form. Thus students are kept informed of how they are doing and have a chance to work on weak points. Also, the Coordinator receives valuable feedback on the program and can restructure course work and activities to respond to employer needs and suggestions.

Students are regularly evaluated in the CVAE class, and this evaluation is given to the students and to their parents. Conferences with students are held to deal with weaknesses or problems. Also, home visits or telephone calls are made to each parent to keep them informed and to obtain their feelings and feedback about the program.

The data included in the Conclusions section on attendance, dropout, and grade point averages, constitute a real form of evaluation for the program. They suggest a considerable success in responding to the specific objectives of reducing absenteeism and dropout rates and of improving students' grade point averages and academic work on their return to regular academic or vocational programs at the end of one or two years. Evaluation beyond these statistics exists on an informal basis. In a program as small as this one, considerable personal contact exists between the Coordinator and community representatives, parents, teachers, and students. Although perhaps less statistically helpful, this kind of feedback plays a major role and contributes significantly to the program's evaluation.

## Future of the Project

The major plans for changes in the CVAE Program for the future have to do primarily with expansion. For example, the size of the target group envisioned at North Gwinnett for the future is 120 students. At present, fewer than half that many participate. Also, it is hoped that the program can be expanded to more and more schools.

A parallel change envisioned relating to this training is closer coordination of the increasing number of coordinators around the state. At present, coordinators are supervised for the first year of their employment, but then largely left on their own. Uniform standards and further sharing of ideas and experiences could be accomplished with stronger coordination and supervision.

Many small procedural changes and longer range improvements are envisioned. One teacher spoke of the hope for fuller training of teachers who participate in the interlocking curriculum. The new vocational school in Lawrenceville will require a system of coordination between that and the CVAE Program. It is hoped to build a junior college in the county, whose activities also might be coordinated in some ways with those of CVAE. Transportation presents a major problem with the work experience part of the program at present, and various ideas will be tried to deal with that. Financial limitations also constitute a problem, and the possibility of additional personnel and monetary support is a hopeful prospect for some future point.

## Conclusions

Some statistical evidence supports the subjective reactions indicating success of the CVAE Program. For example, ninth graders experience an average 15 point increase in their GPAs the first year in the program. This generally drops back somewhat the second year, and levels off as students work back into the regular curriculum in their third year. Attendance also shows dramatic improvements of 50% or more the first year. It also drops back the second year to perhaps a 10% to 15% increase and levels off, remaining higher than the average school attendance. Dropout figures for the school as a whole have also improved over the last four years. The dropout rate in 1972 was 4%, reflecting a steady decline from a 7% average through the 1960s.

These statistics, along with the responses of teachers, employers, administrators, and the Coordinator, point to considerable success in responding to virtually all of the purposes, general objectives, and specific objectives that the program defines for itself (as listed earlier). Many of these, particularly the purposes, are phrased in such a way that the interview responses provide the best indication of the success achieved. However, general objectives 1 and 2 and specific objectives 1, 3, 4, and 7 are directly responded to by the statistics provided. Ten students interviewed all felt that the program had helped them and were able to define specific ways in which it had helped them. Perhaps this positive conclusion should be tempered by the fact that there is still room for improvement; however, the program clearly seems to be responding to the goals it sets for itself.

Perhaps the best way to summarize these conclusions is through the Coordinator's thoughts on the different groups with which she deals:

> The majority of students realize it has helped them complete school and get a job. Some probably lose interest because we keep trying to push their standards up. But most respond positively, and make real progress.

She felt staff reaction was also primarily positive:

> We get some noncooperation. They [teachers] may resent the special treatment these students get, particularly if they haven't been asked to be committed to the program. But most are helpful and enthusiastic.

As for parental and community response, she comments:

> Eighty percent of the parents have had a positive experience with the program. Twenty percent I haven't been able to swing over. A few of the community representative employers have had a bad experience with a student even though we warned them that these kids needed special help. Occasionally they get disenchanted and won't take any more students. But the success rate is high.

The Coordinator seems thoroughly aware of problem areas touched on in the Future of the Project section. Although there are ways in which the program can be improved, the problems that exist are largely logistical and practical, bearing little on the program's definition or fundamental conception.

Transportability

The Coordinator believes that the program is completely transportable to any comparable secondary school using or adapting the materials available. Some of the available materials are CVAE Training Guides, including 15 manuals supplied in summer training, providing the first year curriculum, second year curriculum, and role playing techniques; a set of the Coordinator's books defining the CVAE Program in Georgia; and work evaluation forms and other similar forms used in the program. Ten students interviewed all felt that the program would help other students in their school. When asked to describe the students it would especially help, one student responded:

> The ones that's failing and ready to quit and don't have a very good home and don't want to work and don't care and is always getting into trouble.

Many obstacles must be overcome in establishing such a program. Knowledge of such challenges is essential to someone interested in replicating the program at another site. Some of the chief ones encountered at North Gwinnett High School are:

1. Enlisting the full cooperation of the school principal, faculty, and community representatives and employers. The principal must be willing to cooperate in terms of arranging block scheduling so that CVAE students can be together and in terms of allowing small class sizes so that adequate individual attention is possible. Teachers must be enthusiastic about the program to make it work and must fully understand its purposes. Employers also must understand the purpose of the work experience and make it useful for students' needs. This requires considerable foundation building in terms of involving the egos of all contributing groups.

2. Avoiding the stigma that often goes with "special" programs for underachieving students.

3. Providing adequate training for teachers so that academic courses truly become career related.

4. Assuring a positive, success-filled experience for students to break their pattern of failure.

5. Providing transportation for students in going to and from jobs.

6. Developing ways to relieve the heavy burden that falls on the Coordinator and spreading the tasks out among those able and willing to help.

There are many other challenges, but these are some of the major ones that have occurred at North Gwinnett High School.

The following Program Outline may be of additional assistance to someone interested in replicating the program.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

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| Goal: | To reduce dropout rates and abseentism, to develop in the unmotivated student positive attitudes toward work, other people, and his environment, and to keep the potential dropout in school and better prepare him for a place in the world of work as a contributing citizen. |
| Students Served: | A selection of high school students (50 of 600 in the school surveyed) who are two or more grade levels below their peers, school alienated, of dull normal intelligence and above, underachieving for cultural or psychological reasons, and frequently or excessively absent. |
| Staff: | One full-time Coordinator/Instructor/Program Director, plus participation by several regular academic teachers in the interlocking studies program. |
| Funding Source: | First year: State funds.<br>Subsequent years: 90% local funds, 10% state and federal funds. |
| Materials, Facilities, and Support: | The Coordinator works out of a classroom at the high school, and draws on statewide CVAE training guides and coordinators' handbooks, as well as materials at the high school and local city libraries, and material she has accumulated. The program receives support from the school faculty and administration, local employers, civic leaders, and parents. |

Student Activities: The CVAE class for ninth and tenth grade students, including career education, field trips, practice job interviews, worksheets, and so on; VOCA, a club providing social and project activities; the interlocking studies program; work experience; and career and personal counseling.

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